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ABSTRACT

General education and professional education are both important in a learning society. Pedagogy has devoted all its attention to developing general education while regarding professional education as a type of nonobligatory education. From the beginning, general education and professional education have been divided, with the former oriented toward acquisition of knowledge and values and the latter oriented toward acquisition of working skills and professional knowledge. This resignation toward professional education has not been intentional but rather a consequence of the wider context of social and historical development. Although the distinctions between general and professional education are useful and necessary, their opposition and division for any reason and with any aim are damaging and unnatural. This is especially true today, when the imperative of scientific-technical development is, more than ever before, introducing radical changes into the sphere of communal life and activity. The relationship between general and professional education must be reconsidered, with emphasis on the link between gaining knowledge and values and gaining vocational skills and appreciation for the important types of learning in a learning society. It is becoming increasingly clear that educated experts and specialists will be better able to follow technological and social changes if they have a sufficiently broad general education. (Contains 14 references.) (MN)

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GENERAL AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION WITHIN THE CONCEPTION OF THE LIFELONG LEARNING

The paper deals with the general and professional education within the lifelong learning conception. The analysis of the phenomena and their mutual relationship points to the different understanding of the phenomena and the study of the relationship between these two modalities of the unique process. The study concentrates on dimensions of the education as a mechanism for the transmission of knowledge about facts, transmission of the particular image of a human being, and not just of any image but of the image which the society accepts and approves of, and as transmission, acquirement and development of skills for the universal application of the knowledge on a human scale. Therefore, the education strives to develop moral and human competence to master the ability to think in the only possible way – by using one's own head, and to work on the basis of the gained knowledge and competence. Linking of the general and professional education is a necessity of the learning society, which is an adequate environment for the education in the function of the personal development of an individual and social development and prosperity.

(summary)

1.Introduction in problem

Relationship between general and professional education is the phenomenon, which is always coming back taking on new characteristics but also preserving the old ones. The relationship sometimes appears in a rather severe form or even in the form of exclusion and opposition. The issue of the relationship between general and professional education from the time when the education had anthropological meaning until today, in spite of all strivings for these two artificially separated

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phenomena of the educational process to come closer or to be perceived as two moduses of the universal process of education, and not as two opposite or exclusive phenomena, has not been solved. Is there any hope for the general and professional education to be outside the discourse of the paradigmatic break in the sciences, which deal with the education and in the actual educational practice? To answer this question is not an easy task; this question also includes some other questions, first of all of all the sciences which deal with a human being as an individual and social being (i.e. anthropological and social sciences). To ask and answer these questions simultaneously depends on the entire scientific, technological and social development, and even more on the tendency of the development, which – by the way – is still very blurred, potential development trend, and not the stable result.

2. General and professional education- different comprehensions

When analysing the relationship between the general and professional education we come upon the question of the understanding of the content, meaning and function of the general and professional education. Therefore, it is logical that because of the theoretical and practical vagueness and understatements of the terms some problems appear in the analysis of their relationship, and difficulties appear in the practical overcoming of the gap between these two aspects of the educational phenomenon. This is especially visible in the systematic-organizational, content-program, pedagogy-didactical plan of changes in the parts of the system and in the system as a whole. It is important to point out that the analysis of the relationship between the general and professional education demands the inclusion of many various aspects with regard to the number of factors, phenomena and processes that should be taken into consideration (Potkonjak N.,1981.,p.148.-210.). When discussing the relationship of the general and professional education, it is necessary to precisely define the criteria of the content, role and meaning of these categories of education. In discussions about general and professional education and their relationship various criteria are taken into consideration according to what is to be emphasised about the terms or what is to be pointed out in regard to their relationship. When analysing these terms, some take as the criterion the basic characteristics of the content of the phenomena; some take the function of the content that general and professional education have in a development of the

personality; some take the competence for the professional work and continuation of the education; some take the function of the education in the educational process. Of course, it is impossible to list all the criteria used. We want to emphasize that those various criteria in discussions have practical consequences for their implementation, and for the understanding of the general and professional education in the educational practice. When discussing about the general and professional education and their relationship it is possible to take as the criteria for their understanding the nature of educational content and function that these contents have in the process of formation of the individuality. The fact that the categories of the general and professional education are historical, that they are liable to the changes, and that they are conditioned by the social context (social-political, economical, scientific-technological, culture-traditional conditions and needs) as well as individual needs and possibilities, must be taken into consideration. General and professional education in pedagogic science has rarely been treated in the same way. Moreover, pedagogy has given all its attention to the development of general education, while professional education was regarded as a part of non-obligatory education. General education started with rather narrow circle of fields. First of all there were fields of the literature and classical languages, later on fields of humanistic science were included, and finally the fields of natural sciences. Even today, the fact that the general education covers the content from the field of technology and technique, manufacturing processes, economy and other fields that are traditionally believed to be the part of professional education, is not fully accepted. In regard to the way of changing the content and function of general education, and in some kind of harmony with its dominant content and function, general education was called: academic, classic, humanistic, general culture, etc. On the other side, professional education went through the even more difficulties, starting from the various forms of learning the skill in the working process, through the professional education in schools of the vocational and industrial type, to the hybrid forms towards the modern professional education the basis of which is wide general education, and which is gained at all levels of the formal, non-formal and informal education. Historically, as the content and function of the general and professional education were changing, their relationship was changing too. Social development and social separation resulted in the opposition (antagonism) between the physical and spiritual work, so

the relationship between the general and professional education was neither seriously examined, nor this was demanded. In contrast, there was the tendency to separate these two educational categories even more. Resignation of the pedagogy towards the professional education is not its own fault, but the consequence of the wider context of the social and historical development. Double understanding of the general and professional education resulted at one side from the social development on the basis of the so-called "socially-ideological etatism" and "technical industrialism" (Pediček F.,1992.). The characteristic of the socially-ideological etatism is that it gave priority to the transmission of the historical values, general intellectual, ethically moral, nationally-cultural knowledge and values that through the various stages of the historical development formed into what we know as general education. Technical industrialism gave priority to the working-professional knowledge, which formed into what we know as professional education. Educational ideal of the technical industrialism is "to be industrious". The ideal "to be industrious" on the basis of the acquired knowledge and professional competence is not sufficient in the modern environment of the scientifically technological development of the post-industrial society. The logic of gaining the professional education and putting it in the function of the logic of development where the imperative is "larger production, more energy, more production, larger economic and social wealth" creates incredible difficulties in the sphere of the development of humans and their anthropologic nature, specially from the aspect of how to solve the existential problems of the emancipation of the human being in the process of his or her formation, not informing. General and professional education were from the very beginning divided into the one which was oriented towards the gaining of the knowledge and values and the one which oriented itself towards gaining of working skills and professional knowledge. Pedagogy was oriented to the field of education and teaching, and in its lemmatisation it derived the term education from the term of education and teaching, instead of deriving the term of teaching, education and general education from the term of the education. Therefore, what happened was that the term of professional education, with the exception of some branches of pedagogy – industrial pedagogy and andragogy – was not included in the scientific lemmatisation of pedagogy. This might be the reason for pedagogy to pay due to its scientific autonomy, which is visible in the fact that in the period of the educational

boom the education enters the fields of other sciences, which pay more attention to it. There is the attempt to overcome the resulting gap between the general and professional education in the theoretical lemmatisation of pedagogy and other sciences which deal with the educational phenomena, and in the practice of the consequent oppositions which are manifested in the division of ways of acquiring general and professional education in various types of school and non-school forms of education, in division on general education subjects and content of education and other questions linked to the modernization of the practice of division and non-equality of these two inseparable aspects of the educational process.

3. General and professional education in scientific-technological and social changes

Difference between the general and professional education, which results from the nature of both of the "types" of education, is useful and necessary, but the opposition and division from any reason and with any aim are damaging and unnatural. This is especially the case in the modern period of social development when the imperative of the scientific-technological development is, more than ever before, to introduce radical changes in the sphere of communal life and activity. In the scientific-technological changes there are three important components: production, knowledge and education (Đorđević J.,1987.). Education should in this context be regarded as a relatively independent sphere, which is connected with the science and production. Education should reflect the changes in production, technology and science, and be the factor of changes, which will influence the scientific-technological changes and production processes. It is right to point out that education should become the key factor of scientific-technological changes. In that sense what is needed is the preorientation in the understanding of the education as a process, which improves the development of the society, and individuals, which make part of the society. Therefore, education is the process of becoming a human being who do not acquire knowledge, values, skills and habits with the aim of adapting to the existing reality, but who, through the various experiences learns to express themselves, to realise their possibilities continually. The education in these processes has the special role of the emancipation of the human being who does not fit in the existing "image of the world" and "image of a

human being", but has the emancipation role to analyse their "personal image" and "the image of world" that they create (Toffler A.,1992.). But such an emancipation role of a human being is not possible in the non-defined study of terms and content of the general and professional education, not even in the case of their linking and connecting. The problem is far more complex than this. General and professional education should be analysed within the changed essence of the education as a process of (trans) formation and liberation of human potential, and not as the process of "formation" and "obligatory socialization". Education in this sense should happen any time in life (in lifelong learning) and outside the boundaries of institutions, traditional programs, methods and technologies of education. What is necessary for such education is the reorientation in the understanding of the general and professional education in the way that the gaining of knowledge and values is linked with the content of vocational skills and knowledge, i.e. that the professional-vocational education develops and serves as the basis for the content of the general education. In our times of changes, demand for the "professionalization" of the general education and "deprofessionalization" of professional education does not seem to be an amusing game with words, but the necessity to remove the artificially created boundaries between the general and professional education (Potkonjak N.,1989.). A tendency to interwoven the content of general and professional education is a demand of the actual scientific-technological and other social changes, where the integralism of the general and professional education, theoretic and applicational, scientific and work-productive and vocational education is the key for solving the complex relationship in turbulent processes of human and social development. Modern living and working environment demands from an individual to be able to actively participate in the reality where the constant change and development stand as the only rule. The process of education, learning and training of an individual cannot be a one-way preparation for a particular vocation. It is becoming more and more clear that the educated expert, specialist at all the levels of education, will be able to follow the technological and social changes and to follow more demanding social changes if having sufficiently wide general education and general culture. The general education and culture provide an individual with a wide range of possibilities for engaging various intellectual powers by means of which it is possible to more precisely and more profoundly analyse professions, work-productive processes,

organisation-technological and innovative conditions, but also the context of social changes and demands. Development of the science and technology and social changes demand the solving of the scientific, economic and social problems and needs on interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary bases. The ability to understand the functional, genetic, and systematic-structural links between some phenomena is regarded as the key quality of the education and training of an individual at all levels and in all fields. Preparedness and training for the team interdisciplinary work is an important factor within the changed conditions of co-operative work and living in the social community. The idea of "humanity" in the professional, specialistic education is not in collision with "technicality", in fact, they condition each other. Professional education, interwoved with the dimension of the general education, acquires the basis for development of the critical sense in the environment of the integral life in fighting against the instrumentalism in production-technological, ideological-political or any other aspect of the alienation of the human as an individual and social being. What needs to be overcome in the consideration of the relationship between the general and professional education is the concept according to which the general education is intended to be the minimum of the education for all the members of the society, which is necessary for them to be socially efficient and adaptable. By this, we usually think of the level of elementary, general education, which is followed by the acquirement of the general education at various levels and in various institutions of the education system, or the professional, specialistic education, also at different levels and in various institutions for the professional education.(Klapan A.,Pongrac S.,Lavrnja I.,2001.) In that sense, the tendency towards the change is imposed as a must of the learning society. Each member of the society must gain both general and professional education because they are both directed to the complete development of the individual, because they interwove, influence each other, enrich each other. The understanding of the relationship between general and professional education in the pyramid the bottom of which represents wide general education, and the top of which is professional education, the specialystic education can only conditionally be the basis for the analysis. It would hold if the real education was only the general one, and if the professional education was just a preparation for the professional activity, function and work. However, we must point out that the professional education has the general-education dimension in regard to the type

and structure of the necessary knowledge and values, and in regard to the universality in the personal development, and the function of the recurrent influence on the content and quality of the general education.

4. General and professional education in the concept of lifelong learning

The change in the relationship between the general and professional education results from the more and more emphasised acquirement of knowledge and education outside the school and all life long. The conception of the lifelong learning and education starts from the fact that changes in the sphere of the scientific and technological development put some new challenges on education. Education of quality is believed to be the education where stable bases for the free enter in the "society of knowledge" is created on the bases of the acquired knowledge and social competences for the successful entering into changes, and not just for adaptation. In that sense, the lifelong learning conception becomes the continuum in which every individual has a right and opportunity to further learning and specialization regardless of the previously acquired education. Lifelong learning conception accepts all kinds of knowledge and skills and different ways and means of their acquirement. Among other things, it realises the assumption that the education became a continual activity, right and need of an individual, and duty of the society. Therefore, developed countries consider the human potential to be the most important factor of the developing conception of the society, and the quality of the conception is represented by the education. Developed countries regard the education as the social priority, and they develop the educational conceptions which can best contribute to the economic, social and cultural development of the society, and to the personal development of its members. The lifelong learning conception bases, among other things, on the fact that knowledge has an exponential growth, production and technological processes become more complex, as well as the social relations in macro and micro sphere. To promote the idea of the four key bases of education : "to learn to know", "to learn to do", "to learn to live together" and "to learn to be" (Delors J.,1998.) in conditions of the constant change, it is necessary to preorientate the education according to which an individual is "sentenced" to lifelong learning, which, of course, does not mean lifelong going to school. Therefore, except in school – which

is, by the way, severely criticised – the education is performed in many forms and environments of learning and self-learning. Different ways and forms of learning and education in local social and productive environment are grouped into the system of lifelong learning and education. Therefore, different "segments" of the society become learning environments, and the organized social community gets characteristics of the "learning society". Education in the lifelong learning conception becomes flexible system in regard to the organization and duration, and in regard to the content structure, strategies and procedures of learning. In lifelong learning, it is of great importance to learn how to acquire knowledge (learn to learn), to be able and prepared for self-education and self-learning. Therefore, it is of great importance to remove the boundaries between the general and professional education, i.e. to interweave various forms of gaining knowledge, professional competence and qualifications by means of knowledge, which develops intellectual abilities and skills in the professional work and social relationships. To gain the basic knowledge of the general education as the preparation for the professional knowledge, skills and competences which are continually improving is important condition for the possibility of the permanent learning as continuity, and not as a completed process. Naturally, general education should not be regarded as the process of the "encyclopaedic" acquirement of "all the knowledge and values", but in the sense of acquiring the basic knowledge and values as the basic system of terms and categories from various fields of the social, humanistic, technical and other sciences and scientific disciplines, in order for the knowledge to become guideline for development of intellectual and practical competence (Põggeler F., 1996). Linking of the general and professional education and flexible approach to the process of education in the lifelong learning conception results in the change of terms of the educational success. The traditional conception of education, where an individuel acquired particular types and levels of education, was assessed in terms of type, level and quality of education. The lifelong learning conception does not accept the practical failure because every individual has an opportunity of lifelong development and education, and the society has a duty to provide always available and possible education. Trends of development in education in developed countries show that all of them have interest in the lifelong learning conception (Belanger P., 1996). Countries whose educational policy does not base on such a conception will not be able to follow the trend. This is especially true in regard to the countries in

transition in the "post-communistic period", and Croatia is one of them. These countries carry the burden of the past and of the ideological overlays, which are present in the education as well. The issue of general and professional education was dealt with on declarative level as if the problems did not exist. It was believed that in relationship between the general and professional education with the declaratively presented aim of the so-called universal development of individual everything was clear, and that the general and professional education would in regard to the content, organization, program, didactic-methodical and any other way link into some uniqueness of "the higher level". In spite of all the attempts, the issues remained open as new challenges of not to enter the "impredictable experiments", but to go together and in line with the developed world.

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